

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

ENDC/PV.360
30 January 1968
ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTIETH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 30 January 1968, at 10.30 a.m.

THE UNIVERSITY
OF MICHIGAN

APR 10 1968

DOCUMENT
COLLECTION

Chairman:

U KYAW MIN

(Burma)

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. J.A. de ARAUJO CASTRO
Mr. C.A. de SOUZA e SILVA
Mr. E. MOREIRA HOSANNAH
Mr. J. NOGUEIRA FILHO

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. CHRISTOV
Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV

Burma:

U KYAW MIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS
Mr. A.G. CAMPBELL
Mr. J.R. MORDEN
Mr. A. BERNIER

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. T. LAHODA
Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE
Mr. A. ABDELRAHMAN NOUR
Mr. B. ASSFAW

India:

Mr. M.A. HUSAIN
Mr. N. KRISHNAN
Mr. K.P. JAIN

Italy:

Mr. R. CARACCIOLO
Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI
Mr. E. FRANCO
Mr. F. SORO

Mexico:

Mr. A. GOMEZ ROBLEDO
Mr. A. CARRANCO AVILA

Nigeria:

Mr. B.O. TONWE

Poland:

Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN
Mr. E. STANIEWSKI
Mr. S. DABROWA

Romania:

Mr. O. IONESCO
Mr. G. GEORGESCO
Mr. A. COROIANU
Mr. C. MITRAN

Sweden:

Mr. A. EDELSTAM
Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN
Mr. O.A. GRINEVSKY
Mr. V.V. SHUSTOV
Mr. V.B. TOULINOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. H. KHALLAF
Mr. O. SIRRY
Mr. M. SHAKER

United Kingdom:

Mr. I.F. PORTER
Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE

United States of America:

Mr. S. DePALMA
Mr. L.D. WEILER
Mr. C.G. BREAM
Mr. A.F. NEIDLE

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (Burma): I declare open the 360th plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

2. Mr. CHRISTOV (Bulgaria) (translation from French): The resumption of work by the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has been marked by an event which, in the opinion of the Bulgarian delegation, gives the current session particular importance. I am referring to the presentation at our first meeting (ENDC/PV.357) of the two documents ENDC/192/Rev.1 and ENDC/193/Rev.1, by which the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and of the United States of America introduced complete draft treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

3. The Committee also has before it General Assembly resolution 2346 A (XXII), (ENDC/210), adopted at the twenty-second session on 19 December 1967, requesting that a full report on the negotiations regarding a draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons be submitted to it on or before 15 March. My delegation regards as very significant the fact that the two documents have been placed on our Conference table at the same time. This fact, in our opinion, reflects the sentiment expressed in the message addressed to the Committee by Secretary-General U Thant: "The years of patient negotiation ... must now be brought to fruition" (ENDC/PV.357, para.4). We venture to interpret these words, as an expression not only of the resolve to succeed which is embodied in the General Assembly resolution I have quoted, but also of a certainty, namely the certainty that a stage has been reached where we must succeed because it is really possible to do so.

4. The positions of the Bulgarian delegation on the problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons are explicit and clear. At least we have tried to make them so by endeavouring to set them forth during the discussion which has taken place here (ENDC/PV.345). In our opinion the problem is one of extreme gravity which must be settled urgently in the general interest before it is too late. And there are not many, but only one means of settling it: the conclusion of a treaty to halt a further increase in the number of nuclear-weapon Powers, to take the first step towards the elimination of the threat of atomic war, to reverse the nuclear arms race and to restore to nuclear energy what should be its part and its purpose as a source of benefits for all mankind.

5. That is why my delegation declared its full agreement with the draft treaty submitted to us on 24 August 1967 (ENDC/192, 193). By its basic provisions, and particularly by its articles I and II, it met the requirements of a non-proliferation

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treaty. While expressing the hope that it would be supplemented by an article on control, we welcomed that first draft as a first real step forward in the long negotiation on non-proliferation.

6. We now have before us a complete draft treaty. We have studied it with all the attention it merits. Like the representatives of the member countries who have preceded me, I wish on behalf of the Bulgarian delegation to express to our two co-Chairmen, the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States, our warmest congratulations on the efforts they have made. We note with the greatest satisfaction that these efforts have been crowned with a success which has met with the broadest approval in the Committee and has aroused great hopes throughout the world. Like everyone else in this Committee, we know the difficulties of the task which they have had to accomplish; and we know how much tenacity and patience has been required to obtain the result now before us.

7. In the first place, the two co-Chairmen have succeeded in filling the gap which existed in the draft of 24 August with regard to the problem of control. They have also succeeded, fortunately, in formulating and presenting in treaty language numerous suggestions, proposals and amendments put forward during the debate on the various aspects of the problem of preventing a further increase in the number of nuclear-weapon countries, and of the problems relating to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

8. Consequently we consider that, in accomplishing their difficult task in the spirit of understanding which distinguishes them, the co-Chairmen have for practical purposes made all the delegations engaged in the discussion of the non-proliferation problem participate in the preparation of the new, complete and amended draft. The result is a text which, in the opinion of my delegation, reconciles the widest requirements and interests with the need to take account of an international reality which we know only too well and which imposes limits beyond which, whatever may be said, the conclusion of a treaty could become impossible.

9. In that sense the agreement on the problem of control is specially important. That problem was considered to be the major obstacle to the conclusion of the treaty. In fact, it was used for the purpose of piling up difficulties in order to prevent the achievement of an understanding, with the result that the negotiations were delayed for many months. That obstacle has now been overcome. Article III of the complete draft, based on the principle of international control in accordance with the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and that Agency's safeguards

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system will ensure that the obligations assumed by the parties under articles I and II are carried out. Thus what might be called the keystone of the future non-proliferation treaty has been successfully completed.

10. My delegation appreciates the care and precision brought to the drafting of the four paragraphs of article III to ensure that, with fully effective controls, any interference in the domestic affairs of States and any obstacle to the economic and technological development of the parties to the treaty are precluded. We also note with satisfaction the role to be assumed by the International Atomic Energy Agency in the application of the control, for which it will bear the entire responsibility.

11. I now venture to turn to the problem of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This problem has always occupied a large place in our discussions. It arouses everywhere a particular interest which no one denies to be fully justified. The technological progress achieved in this field has given a considerable impetus to the peaceful application of this new form of energy. The prospects for the future are still vaster -- so vast, it is said, that even the experts declare themselves surprised at the speed with which the peaceful use of atomic energy is developing, particularly in the production of electricity, and refrain from making forecasts. The number of countries that have taken this course is already impressive. Others are about to take it. That is why it would not be an exaggeration to say that all the countries of the world, in one way or another, are interested to the highest degree in the peaceful use of nuclear energy for their economic, scientific and social development.

12. There is no doubt that we are facing an irreversible process, which is both a sign and token of the progress of humanity in the atomic age. Nevertheless, in spite of all that we have just said, it has to be noted that this process, though spectacular, is far from developing in the climate of co-operation that is necessary to enable all countries to benefit from the progress of modern science. It is clear, therefore, that the countries which in this case are the least favoured by this state of affairs are precisely those which have the greatest need of assistance, namely the vast majority of the countries of the world. It is a fact that in the present situation most of the non-nuclear countries possess only very limited capacity in this respect, and that, despite the activity and the praiseworthy efforts of the Agency in Vienna, such co-operation between States as exists is still inadequate and lacks, above all, a solid international base.

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13. Without wishing to overestimate the influence of the non-proliferation treaty on the further development of international co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, I should like to express my delegation's conviction that the conclusion of such a treaty will enable an important step to be taken in this direction. Certainly in this field, as in many others, the treaty will provide significant new elements which will soon exercise a positive influence. We find the reasons for this conviction in the text of the first paragraph of article IV, which establishes the inalienable right of all the parties to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

14. However, it is the second paragraph of article IV which, in our opinion, introduces the new elements to which I have just referred. That is why I make a point of stressing the passages which state that the parties to the treaty have the right to participate in the fullest possible exchange of scientific and technological information, and that parties to the treaty in a position to do so shall also contribute to the further development of the applications of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

15. On the one hand, there is thus based on the treaty a right which every country will be able to use without any restriction. This right is reinforced by enforceable obligations. On the other hand, there are obligations which create duties for the more advanced parties towards the others. Thus the treaty institutes new forms of co-operation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. To our knowledge few international instruments have been conceived in such a spirit of bilateral and multilateral co-operation on a world-wide scale in a field of such importance.

16. With regard to nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, we share the opinion, which seems to us to be that of the majority, that this is a special question and that the solution proposed by article V of the draft treaty should meet any possible requirements of this nature. We place beyond all suspicion the sincerity and good faith of those countries represented on this Committee which have dealt with this problem in the way we know. But it seems to us quite clearly impossible to admit and to include in the non-proliferation treaty the right to manufacture nuclear devices and to carry out nuclear explosions. There is no question in this case of denying a right; nor should the prohibition of all activity of this nature be regarded as an infraction of that right. Account is taken of a state of facts which, for reasons which cannot be refuted and which have been explained here at length, renders the manufacture of nuclear devices incompatible with a non-proliferation treaty.

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17. The revised and completed draft contains a new article VI in accordance with which the parties undertake to pursue negotiations on effective measures of disarmament. Thus this text embodies and transforms into a formal commitment the declaration of intention included in the preamble. We fully understand that a formal commitment to negotiate is still far from being a commitment regarding specific measures which most delegations, including our own, would have liked to see included in the treaty. But it was abundantly clear from the beginning of the discussion that any attempt to link the non-proliferation treaty to specific measures of nuclear disarmament would run into insurmountable difficulties at this stage of the negotiations. It was to be feared that they could delay the discussion and even cause it to break down.

18. My delegation has always maintained that the non-proliferation treaty is not an end in itself but a stage in the disarmament negotiations. The addition of article VI strengthens the hope which we place in the non-proliferation treaty as a major step towards the solution of other topical problems with which we are concerned. Unless I am mistaken, this is the first time for a very long while that account has been taken of legal commitments of this nature; because of that, the process of disarmament is given a new political and legal basis in the form of an international instrument committing the parties -- all the parties -- to the treaty to pursue negotiations.

19. The Bulgarian delegation approves the complete treaty which has been submitted to us. This draft is the fruit of constant efforts made for nearly three years since the first draft was submitted in 1965 (ENDC/152). That means that every sentence and every word in the text has been thoroughly thought over and weighed. In our opinion this draft provides in its form and in its content the solution to the problem to which the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has devoted, if I have counted correctly, more than one hundred and twenty meetings. In our opinion this draft provides the assurance that the treaty when implemented -- as we hope it will be -- will put an end, under effective international control, to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. That is a point which, I believe, no one can doubt. The treaty -- and I mean this treaty -- will pave the way to extensive international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and will enable the negotiations on disarmament problems to move out of the stagnation in which they find themselves precisely because of the delay in solving the non-proliferation problem.

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20. Nor is there any doubt that, in the serious international situation in which the world is engulfed, the agreement which we hope will emanate from this room will have the most favourable repercussions and will contribute to a political détente. To be convinced of this we have only to note the interest and attention with which the work of the Committee has been followed since it resumed on 18 January.

21. I have already said that the Committee has devoted more than one hundred and twenty meetings to the question of non-proliferation. During these meetings the problem has been sifted, most fully and meticulously examined, dissected, discussed and studied in depth. No one can claim that any particular aspect has not been studied sufficiently, or that something has been omitted, forgotten or left unexplained. Nevertheless, permit me to say that it seems to me that we have rather neglected to consider what would happen if the negotiations on non-proliferation failed, if there were no treaty and free rein were given to the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

22. I should now like to revert to a point which appears to us to be of some importance: resolution 2346 A (XXII) of the General Assembly of the United Nations. Under that resolution the Committee has to submit on or before March 15 a complete report on the work it has accomplished. I shall not presume to interpret the General Assembly's intentions, but I do not think that in fixing that time-limit the Assembly wished to reproach the Committee for its slowness. I believe rather that that decision was dictated by an increased awareness of the danger which the problem of proliferation of nuclear weapons represents at the present time, and of the urgent need to put an end to it.

23. Over the past ten years the United Nations has been devoting constant attention to this problem. The impressive number of debates and resolutions shows that the problem has never ceased to be in the forefront of the United Nations concerns. Yet the danger grows ever more menacing. Speaking before the General Assembly on 5 December 1967, the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency said (A/PV.1619, provisional, p.13) that by 1980 countries which at present have no nuclear weapons will be producing 25 tons of plutonium annually, which will be sufficient to manufacture at least 100 bombs per week. A brochure issued at the end of last year by the United Nations Association of the USA states that "seven countries ... could probably produce an atomic bomb within eight months to two years, once the initial decision to do so were taken". (Stopping the Spread of Nuclear Weapons, p.5)

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24. Therefore what the General Assembly passes on to the Committee by its resolution 2346 A (XXII) is, in our opinion, an increased sense of responsibility, and at the same time the Committee is called upon to act accordingly. The Bulgarian delegation is firmly convinced that, within the time-limit assigned to us, the Committee will be able to carry out its task and fulfil the hopes placed in this session.

25. Before concluding my statement I should like on behalf of my delegation to associate myself with the warm words of friendship and welcome addressed to the new leader of the delegation of Brazil, Mr. de Araujo Castro, the new leader of the delegation of India, Mr. Husain, and to the new leader of the delegation of Mexico, Mr. Gomez Robledo. It is most reassuring to know that we shall be able to avail ourselves of their experience at such a decisive moment in the work of the Committee for the conclusion of a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 360th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of U Kyaw Min, representative of Burma.

"A statement was made by the representative of Bulgaria.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 1 February 1968, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.